

Application No.: 10/800,026**Docket No.: 713-1043****AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (canceled)
2. (currently amended) A valve assembly as claimed in claim ~~[[1]]~~ 12, wherein the valve stem comprises at one end of the ~~[[a]]~~ substantially cylindrical portion ~~having at one end the~~ ~~[[valve]]~~ head portion and at the other end a flared portion which forms the elastically deformable portion.
3. (original) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 2, wherein the flared portion is substantially cup or hemispherically shaped.
4. (currently amended) A valve assembly as claimed in claim ~~[[1]]~~ 12, wherein the valve stem is hollow with a closed end at the head portion and the spring ~~additional biasing means~~ is mounted within the valve stem.
5. (canceled)
6. (currently amended) A valve assembly as claimed in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 4, wherein ~~the spring means is a helical compression spring having a valve body end with a larger diameter than a valve head end so that the~~ a valve head end of the spring ~~[[means]]~~ fits within the valve stem and contacts the closed end of said valve stem portion and ~~[[the]]~~ a valve body end of the spring

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[[means]] contacts ~~mounting means within the valve body~~ the support plate.

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A valve assembly as claimed in claim [[7]] 6, wherein the support plate comprises a circular disk which supports [[the]] an open end of the valve stem and ~~also includes~~ a central post over which the valve body end of the spring [[means]] is positioned.

9. (currently amended) A valve assembly ~~as claimed in claim 7~~, comprising:
a valve body including a valve seat surrounding a valve outlet;
a valve stem having a head portion adapted to contact and form a seal with the valve seat
when the valve assembly is in a closed state, the valve stem having an elastically deformable
portion which is deformed when the valve assembly is in an open position thereby providing a
restorative force to bias the head portion towards contact with the valve seat; and
additional biasing means mounted between the valve body and the valve stem to urge the
head portion towards contact with the valve seat;

wherein

the valve stem further comprises a substantially cylindrical portion having at one end the [[valve]] head portion and at the other end a flared portion which forms the elastically deformable portion;

the additional biasing means comprise a substantially cylindrical helical compression spring
having a diameter smaller than an inner diameter of the substantially cylindrical portion of the valve
stem;

the valve body further includes mounting means on which a support plate is mounted;

the support plate supports a valve body end of the spring; and

the support plate has a diameter substantially equal to an outer ~~the outside~~ diameter of the flared portion of the valve stem and an annular ridge is provided on [[the]] a valve stem side of the

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support plate, the annular ridge having an outer ~~outside~~ diameter substantially equal to ~~[[the]]~~ an inner diameter of the flared portion so that the flared portion is supported at ~~[[the]]~~ an outer edge of the support plate.

10. (original) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein the annular ridge has an outwardly sloped outer surface.

11. (currently amended) A valve assembly as claimed in claim ~~[[7]]~~ 9, wherein the valve body comprises an upper plate in which the valve outlet is provided and a support frame which suspends the mounting means of the support plate beneath the valve ~~opening~~ outlet.

12. (currently amended) A valve assembly ~~as claimed in claim 11~~, comprising:
a valve body including a valve seat surrounding a valve outlet;
a valve stem having a head portion adapted to contact and form a seal with the valve seat
when the valve assembly is in a closed state, the valve stem having an elastically deformable
portion which is deformed when the valve assembly is in an open position thereby providing a
restorative force to bias the head portion towards contact with the valve seat; and
additional biasing means mounted between the valve body and the valve stem to urge the
head portion towards contact with the valve seat;
wherein
the additional biasing means comprise a substantially cylindrical helical compression spring
having a diameter smaller than an inner diameter of a substantially cylindrical portion of the valve
stem;
the valve body further includes mounting means on which a support plate is mounted;
the support plate supports a valve body end of the spring;
the valve body further comprises an upper plate in which the valve outlet is provided and a
support frame which suspends the mounting means of the support plate beneath the valve outlet;

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and

the support frame comprises at least three support posts extending substantially perpendicularly from the upper plate, [[the]] distal ends of adjacent said support posts being connected by joining members which form said support mounting means for said support plate.

13. (currently amended) [[A]] In combination, a fluid outlet port including [[the]] a valve assembly according to claim 1 and an outlet conduit connector adapted for connection to the outlet port, wherein

the valve assembly comprising:

a valve body including a valve seat surrounding a valve outlet;

a valve stem having a head portion adapted to contact and form a seal with the valve seat when the valve assembly is in a closed state, the valve stem having an elastically deformable portion which is deformed when the valve assembly is in an open position thereby providing a restorative force to bias the head portion towards contact with the valve seat; and

an additional biasing element mounted between the valve body and the valve stem to urge the head portion towards contact with the valve seat; and

the outlet conduit connector includes an engagement element which, when the outlet conduit connector is connected to the outlet port, engages with the ~~valve stem~~ head portion of the valve stem and moves the valve assembly to the open position.

14. (new) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein the flared portion is substantially cup or hemispherically shaped.

15. (new) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein the valve stem is hollow with a closed end at the head portion and the spring is mounted within the valve stem.

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16. (new) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 15, wherein a valve head end of the spring fits within the valve stem and contacts the closed end of said valve stem and a valve body end of the spring contacts the support plate.

17. (new) A valve assembly as claimed in claim 16, wherein the support plate comprises a circular disk which supports an open end of the valve stem and a central post over which the valve body end of the spring is positioned.

18. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 13, wherein the valve stem comprises a substantially cylindrical portion having at one end the head portion and at the other end a flared portion which forms the elastically deformable portion.

19. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 18, wherein the flared portion is substantially cup or hemispherically shaped.

20. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 13, wherein the valve stem is hollow with a closed end at the head portion and the additional biasing element is mounted within the valve stem.

21. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 13, wherein the additional biasing element is a helical compression spring having a valve body end with a larger diameter than a valve head end thereof.

22. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 18, wherein
the additional biasing element is a helical compression spring having a diameter smaller than an inside diameter of the substantially cylindrical portion of the valve stem; and
the valve body includes a mounting element and a support plate which is mounted on said

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mounting element and supports a valve body end of the spring.

23. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 22, wherein the support plate comprises a central post over which the valve body end of the spring is positioned.

24. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 22, wherein the support plate has a diameter substantially equal to an outer diameter of the flared portion of the valve stem and an annular ridge is provided on a valve stem side of the support plate, the annular ridge having an outer diameter substantially equal to an inner diameter of the flared portion so that the flared portion is supported at an outer edge of the support plate.

25. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 24, wherein the annular ridge has an outwardly sloped outer surface.

26. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 24, wherein the valve body comprises an upper plate in which the valve outlet is provided and a support frame which suspends the mounting element and the support plate beneath the valve outlet.

27. (new) A combination as claimed in claim 26, wherein the support frame comprises at least three support posts extending downwardly from the upper plate, distal ends of adjacent said support posts being connected by joining members which form said mounting element for said support plate.